

economy, and helping our country attract the industries and jobs of tomorrow. Because of his leadership, we have expanded high-speed Internet access, fueled growth in the mobile

sector, and continued to protect the open Internet as a platform for entrepreneurship and free speech. I am grateful for his service and friendship, and I wish Julius the best of luck.

Statement on the Withdrawal of the Nomination of Caitlin J. Halligan To Be a Judge on the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit

March 22, 2013

Today I accepted Caitlin Halligan's request to withdraw as a nominee for the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit. I am deeply disappointed that even after nearly 2½ years, a minority of Senators continued to block a simple up-or-down vote on her nomination. This unjustified filibuster obstructed the majority of Senators from expressing their support. I am confident that

with Caitlin's impressive qualifications and reputation, she would have served with distinction.

The DC Circuit is considered the Nation's second highest court, but it now has more vacancies than any other circuit court. This is unacceptable. I remain committed to filling these vacancies to ensure equal and timely access to justice for all Americans.

The President's News Conference With King Abdullah II of Jordan in Amman, Jordan

March 22, 2013

King Abdullah. First of all, Mr. President, if you allow me, on behalf of myself and all Jordanians, to welcome you and your distinguished delegation back here in Jordan. I fondly remember your visit here several years ago when you were a Senator, and it is a great delight to welcome you back to Jordan as the President of the United States, enjoying your second term.

We are delighted with the in-depth discussions that were very, very fruitful on our strategic and historic partnership, and you have been an old friend, as has the United States, for so many decades. We are very grateful to you, sir, and the administration, as well as Congress and the American people, for the continuous support that has been shown to Jordan over so many years. And the U.S. assistance that has helped us throughout so many years has allowed us to get Jordan to where we are today and, hopefully, will continue to help us advance our shared goals of development, security, and regional peace.

We did have the opportunity to discuss Syria. And obviously, we are all horrified by the loss of life and the brutality of the conflict. We are extremely concerned of the risk of prolonged sectarian conflict that—if it continues as we're seeing—leads to the fragmentation of Syria, which obviously will have disastrous consequences on the region for generations to come. Therefore, it is immediate—it is important to have an immediate need for an inclusive political transition that ends the conflict and the threats that emanate from it.

What we are facing now, today, obviously is an urgent need for the international community to help in humanitarian assistance to catch up to the challenges that we are facing, as the countries bordering Syria. And not only do we need to look at the ability to stockpile humanitarian supplies to the Syrian people inside their country, but also to be able to assist those that have fled.

Jordan today is hosting, by far, the largest number of Syrian refugees. The numbers have